



NEWS RELEASE

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE LETTER TO GULF WAR VETERANS

Earlier this month the Department of Defense Veterans Affairs and Health and Human Services, announced a plan to better understand the medical nature of the Persian Gulf Syndrome.

coordination with the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Health and Human Services, announced a plan to better understand the medical nature of the Persian Gulf Syndrome.

The attached letter from Secretary of Defense William Perry and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General John Shalikashvili to Gulf War Veterans is the most recent effort in this investigative process.

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WASHINGTON, THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

1424

25 MAY 1994



MEMORANDUM FOR PERSIAN GULF WAR VETERANS

SUBJECT: Persian Gulf War Health Issues

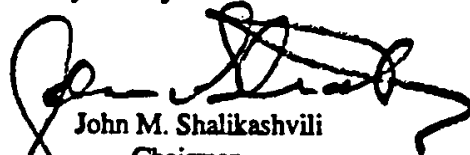
As you may know, there have been reports that some Persian Gulf War veterans are experiencing health problems that may be related to their service in the Gulf. We want to assure each of you that your health and well-being are top priorities for the Department of Defense.

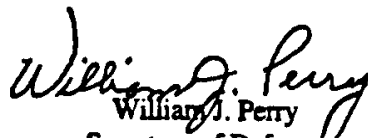
There are many hazards of war, ranging from intense combat to environmental exposures. Anyone who has health problems resulting from those hazards is entitled to health care. If you are experiencing problems, please come in for a medical evaluation. Active duty personnel and their eligible family members should report to any military hospital and ask to be included in the Department's Persian Gulf War Veterans Health Surveillance System. You will receive a full medical evaluation and any medical care that you need. Reserve personnel may contact either a military hospital or their nearest Veterans Affairs Medical Center and ask to be included in the DoD Surveillance System or the VA's Persian Gulf War Health Registry. You will receive a full medical examination. Depending on the results of the evaluation and eligibility status, reserve personnel will receive medical care either from military facilities or from VA facilities.

There have been reports in the press of the possibility that some of you were exposed to chemical or biological weapons agents. There is no information, classified or unclassified, that indicates that chemical or biological weapons were used in the Persian Gulf. There have also been reports that some veterans believe there are restrictions on what they can say about potential exposures. Please be assured that you should not feel constrained in any way from discussing these issues.

We are indebted to each one of you for your service to your country during the Persian Gulf War and throughout your military careers. We also want to be sure that you receive any medical care you need.

Thank you for your service.


John M. Shalikashvili
Chairman
of the Joint Chiefs of Staff


William J. Perry
Secretary of Defense